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United States Delegation at
the Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam

American Embassy
Paris, August 12, 1969

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Special Assistant to the
President for National
Security Affairs
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Henry:

As a sequel to my letter of August 9, I submit
the following:

Thuy went into greater detail regarding a
political settlement than ever before, particularly
as to a provisional so-called "coalition government".
As the record stands now, his position on political
settlement is thus, at least superficially, more
explicit and more elaborate than ours.

His position is, to be sure, unacceptable. But
I believe we should evolve a counter-idea which goes
into at least as much detail. In this strange business,
you can sometimes start moving towards a deal by matching
up details. We should have at least as many details
on the table as he has. I do not press for a
"counter-proposal" but for authority to discuss and
to ask questions. The GVN would not be asked to
produce a new program full of more proposals.

We, however, must produce more specifically what
is involved in our present proposals. For example:
Just who does organize the elections and under what
laws? How will the election commissions be chosen and

DOS Review Completed.

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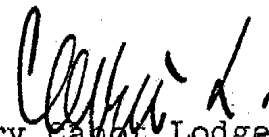
what will be their authority? What sort of elections are we talking about - assembly, presidential or what? What will the armed forces (including police) on both sides be doing? These are only some of the details which need clarification. And that means careful consultation with Thieu.

We should not approach these questions hypothetically with Thieu. We should, rather, have a specific point to raise with him and then decide together what we can say to Hanoi on whatever this point might be.

Doubtless we must wait for Thieu to form his new cabinet. If you think that this approach has merit, we might discuss it when I see the President and you next week.

With warm regards,

As ever yours,


Henry Cabot Lodge

P.S. In addition to the matters I mentioned to you here, I hope to have a chance to talk to the President about what should be done in Paris before November 1 and what should be done in Viet-Nam, in the United States and in East Asia immediately after November 1.

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